

St Mary's Church of England Primary School Bitteswell

The Green, Bitteswell, Lutterworth, LE17 4SB

Inspection dates 17–18 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- St Mary's has maintained its excellence despite considerable changes since the last inspection, including a new headteacher and a number of other staff changes.
- Pupils make outstanding progress and achieve exceptionally well in reading, writing and mathematics. They have excellent skills in using a range of new technology to support their learning.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. All staff provide a wide range of interesting and often practical activities that challenge pupils and are well matched to their ability levels.
- Children in Reception make outstanding progress because of detailed and careful planning, close links with parents and carers and excellent teaching.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Their very positive attitudes to learning have a strong impact on their progress. They demonstrate great pride in their work and feel safe in school.
- The school is led exceptionally well by the headteacher. She has, with the support of all staff, continued to improve the school and ensure that it has not stood still since the last inspection.
- The governors provide very knowledgeable leadership and hold all to account for their performance. They are very aware of the school's strengths but also investigate rapidly if there are any ways in which it can improve further.
- The leadership of reading, writing, mathematics, and the support for children in Reception, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, is very effective. The leadership of other subject areas is not yet so well developed.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 11 lessons and parts of lessons. Many of these were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions took place with the headteacher, governors, pupils, parents, staff, and a representative of the local authority.
- Samples of pupils' work were looked at carefully. Some pupils read books with the inspector.
- The inspector analysed 38 responses to the online survey (Parent View).
- In addition, 20 staff questionnaires were considered.
- The inspector looked at key inspection documents, including performance data produced by the school, procedures for safeguarding, reports to the governing body, and the school's improvement plan and records of how it judges its own effectiveness.

Inspection team

Geof Timms, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Mary's is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, or school action plus or a statement of special educational needs, varies widely between year groups but is below average overall.
- The large majority of the pupils are White British. A very small number start school at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- Very few of the pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which in this school provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school manages a Before and After School Club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the role of staff who lead subject areas, by giving all staff who have such responsibilities the opportunities and time they need to thoroughly check the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children start in Reception with knowledge, skills and understanding broadly in line with those expected for their age, although the small size of year groups means this can vary widely from year to year. They make outstanding progress over the year and by the time they enter Year 1, many are working above the levels expected, especially in communication and language, and personal, social and emotional development.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 currently make excellent progress in reading and in their ability to link letters and sounds. In the national check on Year 1 reading skills in 2012, pupils did much better than the national average. This is the result of effective teaching of letters and sounds, and changes to the way reading is taught to encourage pupils to read a wider range of books. Pupils throughout the school read confidently and widely, and enjoy talking about books.
- In Years 3 to 6, pupils make outstanding progress. By the time they leave school, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are usually well above average. Although there was a dip in the national tests in 2012, this was the result of an exceptionally high proportion of pupils who had particular learning difficulties. The current Year 6 pupils are once again on track to reach well-above-average standards at the end of the year.
- High-quality work was evident in almost all lessons observed, in pupils' past work and in some other subjects as well as English and mathematics. For example, displays of work in Years 1 and 2 showed good learning in art and design and history on the theme of castles. In Years 3 and 4 pupils' knowledge of musical terminology is outstanding. Pupils' skills in using a range of new technology such as tablet computers and electronic readers are at an advanced level.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported and make outstanding progress in developing their basic literacy and numeracy skills, and are very well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Boys and girls, including the small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language and the very few pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, all make excellent progress. In 2012 none of the pupils who took the Year 6 national tests were supported by the pupil premium. The school's records shows that eligible pupils are currently making progress in line with their classmates, and their attainment in English and mathematics is above average.
- Where staff recognise a need for extra support this is rapidly provided. For example, in Years 3 to 6 the recent introduction of extra staff has led to smaller teaching groups that focus more closely on pupils' individual ability levels and building on their previous learning. The school's records show that this has quickly had a good impact on their progress.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The excellent quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection even though there have been considerable changes of staff. Pupils talk confidently about how teachers help them learn new things and how they particularly enjoy practical activities. Relationships between pupils and teachers are extremely strong. Partly because of this, pupils typically make outstanding progress in lessons.
- Teachers provide inspirational activities for pupils. In Year 5 and 6, for example, pupils were fully

engrossed in observing and recording the impact of different amounts of salt on melting ice. Teachers are particularly good at encouraging pupils to work together. They provide a lot of opportunities for pupils to talk and share their learning, as well as to evaluate and assess each other's work. Teachers are very effective at using new technology in their planning and teaching, and make sure that lessons are rich in stimulating resources.

- The youngest children have excellent opportunities to explore learning through a wide range of play and teacher-led activities. After an excellent session in which the more-able children were learning how some sounds are made by vowel letters divided by a consonant, they were able to use chalk to write words outdoors. This enthused them and particularly appealed to the boys, encouraging their writing skills very effectively.
- Teaching assistants play a very effective and integral role in the excellent teaching. They make a quiet, unobtrusive but very important contribution to pupils' learning and progress, whether supporting them on a one-to-one basis in classrooms or leading small groups who need extra support or more demanding work to do.
- Most lessons have a good pace and pupils are set targets to improve their learning. The marking of their work and the feedback provided by teachers are often excellent, and much improved since the last inspection.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is exemplary. They are extremely polite and friendly, and show pride in their achievements and in their school. They live up to the school's strong values and its motto of 'Learn, Love and Believe'. They are clearly becoming responsible, respectful, caring members of society.
- Pupils' attitudes have an extremely positive impact on their learning. This ensures that there are no notable interruptions or disruption to learning, so teachers are able to provide interesting, exciting lessons. This was evident in the way groups could work on mathematics projects while in the gardens with a learning support assistant, or could film each other's role play activities using tablet computers.
- Pupils say there is no bullying, and this is supported by the school's records. They feel safe at school and all parents and carers who completed the on-line questionnaire agreed with this view. Pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying.
- Pupils love taking responsibility and showing independence. This is evident in the large amount of charity work initiated by them, as well as through school council, ECO council, road safety officers and clubs such as the outstanding 'Crackle and Pop' club formed by Year 6 pupils for Reception children. Those who attend the Before and After School Club enjoy a good range of activities, and the breakfast session provides a calm and effective start to the school day.
- Attendance is well above average and there are very few persistent absentees. The school works closely with parents and carers to encourage full attendance.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher provides the school with a clear vision, shared by the other senior leaders and governors, and strong focus on high achievement. She has led the school very effectively

through a period of considerable changes while maintaining and improving on its excellence.

- Excellent leadership in most areas of the school has a clearly positive impact on pupils' progress. This includes leadership of the key subjects of English and mathematics, and the way disabled pupils, others who have special educational needs and Reception children are catered for. Following the staffing changes, the school is in the process of developing the leadership of other subjects so that pupils' learning and progress can be carefully checked across all aspects of their education.
- The headteacher carefully monitors teachers' performance in a way that links closely to the school's improvement priorities and leads to focused staff training. This has been extremely successful in raising standards in writing and improving the way teachers ask pupils searching questions to extend and develop their knowledge, and has led to better teaching and learning in aspects of mathematics.
- The local authority has provided an appropriately 'light touch' level of support for this outstanding school. In particular it has supported the formation of links between local schools and the sharing of expertise.
- The school has developed an outstanding curriculum in which excellent links are made between subjects to support pupils' learning. Activities are often enriched through very productive visits and visitors, and all pupils enjoy residential experiences. Pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted through the way subjects are taught and a wide range of other activities, including charity work and links to other countries such as Belarus.
- The school takes every opportunity to promote tolerance and respect for others, and to make sure every pupil has an equal chance to succeed. The small amount of money available through the pupil premium is used very effectively to support eligible pupils' learning and give them the same opportunities, academically, socially and personally, as the others. The success is obvious in the outstanding progress made by these pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors keep a very close check on the school's success. They are clear about its effectiveness and have an excellent understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. This is because they are very well informed through their visits to school and through meetings and reports from the headteacher and senior staff. Governors involve themselves fully in the life of the school and ensure that it plays a central role in the local community and with the church. The governors understand and use a wide range of information about how well the school is doing, including performance data. Their thorough systems for checking its work mean that they are well aware of the school's targets, staff's strengths and weaknesses and the quality of teaching. They carefully control the budget, including teachers' pay, the use of the pupil premium money and that relating to statements of special educational needs. The governors make sure that all national requirements, including those for safeguarding, are fully met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	120193
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	412211

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	109
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Penelope Grimwood
Headteacher	Hazel Maher
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2009
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